

VINDICIÆ BRITANNICÆ:

BEING

STRICTURES

ON

A LATE PAMPHLET,

By G. WAKEFIELD, A. B.

LATE FELLOW OF JESUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,

INTITULED,

"THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY COMPARED WITH THE
SPIRIT OF THE TIMES IN GREAT BRITAIN."

BY AN UNDER GRADUATE.

My son, fear thou the Lord and the king, and meddle not with such
as are given to change. PROVERBS, xxiv. 21.

Quousque tandem Catalina abutere patientiâ nostrâ? CIC. OR.

LONDON:

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1794.

Say, shall Britannia's generous sons embrace
In folds of amity this harpy race,
Or aid the sword that coward fury rears,
Red with the widow's blood, wet with the orphan's tears?

NEW YEAR'S ODE for 1794.

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
WILLIAM WYNDHAM, Esq. M. P.

— In commoda publica peccem,
Si longo sermone morer tua tempora.

SIR,

WHEN I reflect on the many grave and important objects, which, at the present moment, necessarily occupy your attention, I feel myself half inclined to stop my pen, were I not persuaded that the subject of this performance, which I have now the honour of addressing to you, however deficient in literary merit may be the primary attempts of its author, will readily find an influence and recommendation with you. In you, Sir, the cause and concerns of civil and religious liberty have found so zealous and able a champion, that

A 2 whatever,

whatever, in the smallest degree, may have a tendency to promote so glorious an undertaking, will be entitled to the distinction of your favour.

One reason, I must confess, which induces me to prefix your name to these sheets, is a fond hope, that *its* celebrity will give that stability to this performance, which the author's most sanguine expectations have not the vanity to presume from its internal merits.

But, Sir, there is another reason more solemn, more conclusive, which has prompted me to address my first attempt to Mr. Wyndham. I wish to pay an honest tribute of applause to the man, who, with such powers of eloquence, and such force of reasoning, combats the daring schemes of a faction, desperate, though not on that account less dangerous, who baffles their designs, and holds out their plans, when discovered, to public contempt and public detestation.

I likewise considered, that the name to which I have made bold to have recourse, would remain

main a perpetual record of infamy against me, should I ever be base enough to desert the cause of the King and the People of England, in which, though I have engaged early, I have not engaged without reflection and deliberation.

That you, Sir, may long continue to dedicate yourself to the service of your country, that you may long enjoy a stock of health adequate to labour so truly patriotic, and that you may long continue to receive those rewards which are most satisfactory to a man of honour—the sensations of a self-applauding conscience, and the esteem, the veneration of your countrymen—can be more devoutly prayed for by none, than by,

SIR,

Your most obedient

And most humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

main a perpetual source of injury against me—
should I ever be able enough to desert the cause
of the King and the People of England, in
which, though I have engaged early, I have not
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are most satisfactory to a man of honour—the
testimony of a full-sustaining confidence, and
the esteem, the veneration of your countrymen—
can be more devoutly prayed for by none
than by

Yours affectionate Son,
And most humble Servant,
J. J. J.

THE AUTHOR.

STRICTURES,

&c. &c.

IN an age like the present, when the very fundamental principles of Christianity and civil society are called in question; when, under the mask of free inquiry, doctrines are broached, the most absurd that ever entered the imagination of a maniac, the most diabolical that ever entered the brains of a villain; when government is treated as a farce, and religion as a joke; it is surely a duty incumbent upon every man to exert his reasoning faculty (however bounded may be its capacity) on the side of truth, virtue, and religion. Solon branded with ignominy him who stood neuter in a political dispute. That wise legislator justly considered that man was born, not, like the beasts of the field, to live a certain space of years, and propagate his species, but for a far nobler purpose—to promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures, and to give, as well as to receive, the blessings of social intercourse. And surely, if ever

neutrality

neutrality be blameable, it is in a case like the present; when the contest lies between virtue and vice, between mild, equitable laws, and sanguinary proscriptions, between the whole civilized world, and the banditti of Paris.

Et meæ si quid loquar audiendum,
Vocis accedet bona pars. HOR.

For the first time I emerge from the peaceful recesses of academic studies, and intrude upon the notice and patience of my countrymen.

However extravagant may be the licentiousness of the present age, it certainly is not deficient in what my Lord Bolingbroke so happily characterizes by the term *æthereal spirit*; and be it said, to the disgrace of human nature, that men of great eloquence, and splendid abilities, have joined the cause of impiety and rebellion. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield proves himself, in this Pamphlet (on which it is my present purpose to make a few cursory remarks), to be deficient in neither of the above-mentioned ingredients, although it is interlarded with such scraps of puritanical fustian, such lumps of presbyterian leaven, that an impartial reader, on perusing some of its paragraphs, will be inclined to think them written in the year 1640. I pretend not to rival him in perspicuity of style, or elegance of diction; but it is my intention to oppose fact to falsehood, and common sense to sophistry.

Whatever may be the fate of this his first production, the author is perfectly indifferent. If it be consigned to derision, contempt, and oblivion, the failure

failure will redouble his assiduity to study, and inspire him with the most zealous ardour to improve his defects. If it be received with any symptoms of public approbation, these will confirm him in a design, which he has formed from his earliest youth, of dedicating his life to the political service of his king and country. He is conscious that his intentions are pure, and is confident, as the celebrated Mr. Craggs, in his reply to Sir Robert Walpole, professed himself to be, that ten years hence he will not entertain opinions dissimilar to his present ones.

Mr. G. Wakefield laments, in a style which does honour to the goodness of his heart, the calamities and the distresses attendant upon war—most sincerely do I sympathise with him. War is an evil, I readily confess, of striking magnitude: nor should a nation ever have recourse to an expedient which presents in such profusion, to the appalled sight of sickening humanity, scenes of woe, and spectacles of carnage, unless some dire necessity compels her to chuse the alternative of either renouncing some right, which is *primâ facie* and indisputably her own, and which is necessary to the prosperity of her subjects, or of drawing the steady sword of defence, and putting her cause upon God and the civilized world*.

Notwith-

* It is a well-known axiom of the celebrated pensionary De Witts, that one independent state should never suffer the least infringement of the most insignificant of its *perfect* rights from another, without demanding and obtaining satisfaction for the past, and security for the future; because acquiescence in such a case

Notwithstanding the doubts with regard to the legality of resistance, which have been entertained by men of the first eminence, both in the political and literary world—notwithstanding the pious scruples and timid ambiguities of Hugo Grotius himself—I think, that, without being accused of begging the question, I may assume it as an irrefragable axiom, that self-defence is enjoined by natural, and authorised by revealed religion, *Armæque in armatos sumere jura sinunt*. The *exemplarists* of the eighteenth century are not aware that whilst they rail against our present most *just and necessary war*, they conjure up again into existence the famous Oxford resolutions of 1683, which have long slept in happy oblivion, with this aggravation of impiety, and absurdity, that they do not enjoin non-resistance and passive obedience in favour of a prince descended from a long line of illustrious ancestors, who would, in all probability, be restrained from inordinate cruelties, and unrelenting persecutions, if from no good motives, at least from a desire of not degenerating from the virtues of his ancestors, and not fullying his own reputation, but in favour of a licentious banditti, who have no principles of religion, *no exempla suorum*, to restrain the uncontrolled workings of their passions; whose aim is the aggrandisement of themselves on the ruins

would not fail to be deemed by all neighbouring nations a mark either of want of courage, or want of strength, and would certainly attract a long train of insults and injuries. The Dutchman's doctrine is solid, substantial stuff in the main, but may be carried too far.

of

of subordination, establishment, and tranquillity, and whose means are havock and desolation.

The justifiable cause of war, which the French have given to the various powers of Europe, is the erection of a system of proceeding the most damnable, and the most atrocious, that ever entered into the mind of man, inasmuch as its effects are not confined to the territories which *belong* to these *mild and illumined* legislators, but inasmuch as its pestilential blasts are wafted over the Channel, the Rhine, and the Pyrennees, and contaminate the air of each surrounding country.

The right, in short, that authorises us to take up arms against the banditti of Paris, is a right of the most solemn, of the most awful nature—a right which it would be treason towards God to surrender, which it would be self-murder to alienate—the right of self-preservation. To one who calls himself a Minister of the Gospel, need I suggest that our lives are not our own—that we have only the *dominium utile* of them—that the fee-simple resides in the Giver of every good and every perfect thing—and that it is no more lawful for us to give them up without a struggle to the knife of the assassin, than it is to plunge the poignard of suicide into our bosoms? As well might I preach against the Koran at St. Paul's, as pretend to elucidate these propositions, when addressing myself to Christians.

My Lord Bacon justly remarks, that hostilities should be ascribed, not to the party which strikes the

first blow, but to the party which gives the first provocative. A fact perpetually assumed by our patriots is this: That we first declared war against the French. Now I appeal to any man, who has one single grain of sense, or one single spark of ingenuity, whether a declaration of war is less a declaration of war, because the ceremonies which sometimes attend this public act are omitted? When the French, in a time of peace, kept up a correspondence with self-formed societies in this country; when they fomented discontent amongst the lower classes of our subjects; they infringed the most essential of our perfect rights, the right of administering our own domestic affairs *without let, hindrance, or impediment*, and as clearly indicated their hostile intentions against the king and the people of England, as if the frail goddess Reason, at one of their civic orgies, had fulminated a manifesto against the *Despot of Britain* by name.

Mr. Fox, a senator no less distinguished for his eloquence and irresistible force of reasoning, than his manly candour and liberality of sentiment, in his parliamentary speeches, seems to confound the origin of the war with the *exordia pugnae*.

The end at which we aim in the prosecution of the war with France is the preservation of the Christian religion, for the security of which Mr. Gilbert Wakefield and myself are equally zealous, however we may differ concerning certain of its doctrinal points, and of the British constitution, whose excellence, in spite of the repeated attacks which are incessantly
made

made against it on all sides, sets at nought both the malevolence of the fly, and the violence of the frantic, like the giant of antiquity,

Ὅς ρα παρὰ χρόνιων καθέσθ' οὐκ οὐδὲ γαίων.

The object of the present contest is not to obtain from Spain an indemnification for searching our ships, and insulting our traders, or a liberty of navigating the Bay of Honduras; we are not at present striving to poise the balance of Europe, or to repress the inordinate ambition of either Bourbon or Austria: No, we are now fighting that we may be enabled to transmit, unalloyed, to posterity those civil and religious immunities which are styled the birth-rights of Englishmen. Out of these our ancestors* were not bullied by the menaces of Spain; out of these they were not argued by the sophistry of that anointed pedant James the First; and shall we tamely surrender them a sacrifice on the altar of Gallic equality? Forbid it, sense of conscious honour—forbid it, national pride; let it not be affixed as a stigma to the eighteenth century, that in it Britons betrayed those rights which were their own in common with other independent communities, and those prerogatives which were their due, as holding the most elevated rank in the scale of European power and reputation †.

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* Quorum virtute vacui a securibus & tributis intemerata conjugum & liberorum corpora retenemus. TAC.

† Sure 'tis an insult on the common sense and understanding of an Englishman, to imagine that he can be over-reached in appreciating the intentions of the man who wishes to rob him of all that

The language I use may perhaps be too vehement; but he who speaks the real dictates of his heart, is naturally animated, warm, and decisive, and cannot descend to that logical frigidity, and bewildered maze of argument, which characterize the languid lucubrations of the calm observer.

I am conscious, that in sketching the cause and object of our present war, I have said nothing new; novelty is not my aim, the very profession of it would be presumptuous; since these topics have been discussed so fully in both Houses of Parliament, have been discussed so satisfactorily, in the opinion of all except those whose minds are either led astray by the vanity of broaching singular opinions, or seduced by the hopes of rioting hereafter on the spoils of their country.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield * imagines, that "if a day of real danger should arrive, courtiers and placemen would be the first to desert their master, and that he would find a much safer asylum under the roof of one like himself."

"Venal courtiers, and interested placemen," is the general watch-word of our present patriots. It resembles the "This Morning" of Christopher Layer, and his associates; and I rather apprehend that its

that is valuable, of all that is precious, of all that is dear to him, because that man takes it into his head to make a joke of what he is pleased to term Priestcraft, to sing a song about what he is pleased to term Equality, and to strut about with a three-coloured ribband in his hat,

* Page 11, note.

real meaning is somewhat similar. It is the general inuendo of these gentlemen, "that courtiers and placemen are ready to go all lengths whatever with the most profligate ministry, and to ruin their country, provided a share of the spoils be allotted them." How injurious, how ungenerous an idea! an idea, notwithstanding, which is broached by men whose peculiar profession is the preaching up of Christian love and charity; by men, who are ever making loud professions of candour and moderation; by men, whose views are directed to *absolute truth*. If sentiments unmanly and slanderous as these be the effects of conversation with *the free and intrepid tribes of venerable dead, the saints of Palestine, the sages, philosophers, and patriots of Greece and Rome*, may I keep company with Sir Charles Grandison, Tom Jones, Clarissa Harlowe, and Moll Seagrim. Much as I value the acquisitions of literature, I would never make them at the expense of generosity and integrity.

As a reply to the insinuation, it would be folly in me to offer any arguments of my own, since Paley has answered it in so complete and masterly a manner*.

When

* "Nor is it a conclusion founded in justice, or warranted by experience, that because men are induced by views of interest to yield their consent to measures, concerning which their judgment decides nothing, that they may be brought by the same influence to act in deliberate opposition to knowledge and duty."

"From the success, or the facility, with which they, who
dealt

When a gentleman of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's literary eminence makes an assertion, it is but natural to suppose that he has well weighed the experience of former times, and considered how far they bore him out. Surely when he tells us that "courtiers and placemen would be the first to desert their master," he has forgot that a Granville, a Lindsey, and a Falkland, bled upon the field; that a Strafford and a Montrose died for their master on a scaffold: He does not recollect the loyal quadrumvirate* who offered their lives to save their king's. These men had been the principal ministers of the reign: Did they shrink back, did they decline the responsibility of the measures which they had counselled? Far otherwise; they conducted themselves in a different manner—they came forward like Englishmen, and severally addressed the Usurper in the words of Nisus:

Me me adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum,
O Rutuli, mea fraus omnis, nihil iste nec ausus,
Nec potuit; cœlum hoc & conscia sidera testor
Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.

What must Cromwell's feelings have been, if his heart was not quite callous to the touch of humanity!

dealt out the patronage of the crown, carried measures like these, ought we to conclude that a similar application of honours and emoluments would procure the consent of Parliament to counsels evidently detrimental to the common welfare?"

Paley's Moral Philosophy, book vi. chap. vii.

* Duke of Richmond, Marquis of Hertford, Earl of Southampton, and Earl of Lindsey,

Τῶν κλέος εὐσεΐ' ἐς αἰέν.

It

It is but consonant to common justice to suppose, that the descendants of men like these, with such examples before their eyes, will be equally ready to brave all dangers, and to undergo all extremities, and that too in defence of a monarch, who reigns no less firmly in the hearts of his subjects by means of his great and amiable qualities, and the steady perseverance with which he makes the spirit of the British constitution, and the welfare of his people, the rules of his government, than he does on the throne of his ancestors by the united sanctions of hereditary succession, and parliamentary designation.

It remains to argue, from the history of past times, the probable conduct of those men, of whom Mr. Gilbert Wakefield styles himself one, when the ill-fated Charles applied to them for protection. I will pourtray their conduct in the words of Junius; it is a text which needs no commentary: "They received him (Charles I.) with bows, and smiles, and falsehood, and kept him until they had settled their bargain with the parliament, and then basely sold their native king to the vengeance of his enemies." I provoked not this contrast; the party may thank their own champion, Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, for this furbishing up of the sins of their forefathers, and may ascribe it to the daring and unfounded attack made by him on the aristocracy of England.

The Duke of Portland, it seems, "declared in the House of Lords, that the present war is necessary for the support and defence of the Christian religion."

gion *." Let us examine how far the noble Duke's assertion is corroborated by the principles of reasoning, and the immediate aspect of affairs. The bitter taunts which have been thrown out against the ministers of the Gospel, the severe cruelties which have been inflicted upon them by the French, are no more susceptible of aggravation from the *fucus* of oratory, than they are of defence when applied to the touchstone of common sense and humanity. Surely, many strong marks of detestation and malignity towards all the members of any profession indiscriminately, indicate a rooted hatred, *jure aut injuriâ*, conceived against that profession itself. The patriots of this day recover and lose their political eye-sight by a singular species of intermitting fits: One moment, turning their eyes towards France, they argue future freedom from present slavery, and find an earnest of future happiness in present misery; the next moment, towards the close of 1792, when inspecting the situation of Britain, and the temper of the times on this side of the water, they could not perceive the imminent dangers hanging over our heads, which nine-tenths of this nation apprehended from M. Chauvelin and his crew; they did not understand "*quod sicca ista inter nostra latera versabatur*," because, forsooth, the proofs of correspondence could not *then* be juridically adduced. And in this particular part of the conduct of the French, which I am at present scrutinizing; though the servants of Jesus Christ are

* Page 15.

distinguished by the epithet of Comedians ; though they are driven by shoals into exile, where they are compelled to sue a precarious subsistence from the bounty of foreigners ; though they have been transported by thousands to perish on the inhospitable shores of Guiana ; though they have been drowned by twenties and thirties at a time ; notwithstanding all these atrocious acts of persecution which have been inflicted on the ministers of religion, that zealous politician, my Lord Stanhope, and his adherents, cannot, or rather will not, perceive that Christianity is persecuted, and that the ordinances of God are trampled under foot. But there is no need of adducing a circuitous proof of the atheism and impiety of the French : Have they not openly denied the God that created them ? Have they not, in the public Pandæmonium of their nation, allotted whole days for blaspheming the Saviour of mankind, and cracking their impious jokes on the Founder of Christianity ? Are these effects unhappy from a generous cause ? “ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire.”

By this plain statement of facts, I trust that it plainly appears, that the French are inimical to Christianity : But Christianity, forsooth, must not be defended by the sword. I know not a more unfair mode of arguing, than from excepted particulars to generals. If it be proper to have recourse to this species of logic, because our Saviour was pleased for once to raise a mortal from the grave, it is but reasonable for me to expect, on the loss of a relation or

a friend, that he will return again to act a part in this sublunary world. But to apply this reflection to the passage under consideration—It was necessary both for the completion of the Jewish prophecies, and the authentication of the Christian religion, that our Saviour should be betrayed into the hands of his enemies, and die an ignominious death upon the cross. It is but natural to suppose that Peter was acquainted with this peculiar predestination of his Master's fate, since Jesus, even in such of his discourses as are recorded, frequently enlarges upon his divine mission, and the end to which his mortal nature was to submit. Peter, then, knew that it was the will of God that Jesus should be crucified; he therefore drew his sword in opposition to the will of God, and consequently wrongfully; wherefore he is threatened with divine vengeance if he perseveres in his disobedience; and God's displeasure is denounced against such alone as take up the sword wrongfully. Now can Mr. Gilbert Wakefield furnish me with any sufficient reasons, why I ought to believe that God has fated it, that the Christian religion should be delivered into the fangs of Frenchmen? I do not deal, I must confess, in predestination and necessity; the very supposition is too shocking to be suffered to enter the mind. Surely Mr. Gilbert Wakefield did not reflect upon the consequences which immediately flow from the doctrine here (page 15.) laid down. The French are to cross the Channel, to rack our prelates, to murder our priests, to overthrow our altars, and then, over the carcases of slaughtered

ecclesiastics, amidst the wrecks of prostrate cathedrals, to chaunt the pæans of blasphemy and equality, whilst we sit tamely by, and put up again our swords into their places. There subsists not then the remotest analogy between the case adduced by Mr. Gilbert Wakefield and that under consideration: We are all agreed, that God predestined the catastrophe of his Son, but we are not agreed, that God has indicated his divine pleasure, that we should forego the practice of Christianity merely to gratify the banditti of Paris; and surely the *onus probandi* rests with those who make the assertion. The Jews, we well know, were the particular people of God; and such rules of conduct as he enjoined them, having no reference to the ceremonial rites of Moses, undoubtedly claim our conformity. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield is well *acquainted*, it seems, *with the sages of Palestine*; let me ask him, how the Jews carried on the building of their temple? With one hand they reared the edifice, whilst in the other they brandished the steady sword of self-defence, and repelled the proud aggressors among the Gentiles, who, like the Heathens of France, thought proper to intermeddle in the *domestic* regulations of an independent community.

The Duke of Portland is undoubtedly a very considerable and respectable man, and most readily do I give him credit for integrity and the qualities of the heart. Human judgment being fallible, may be blinded for a time by passion, and the wisest and best are liable to err: Political designs cannot be carried on without a party, and I believe that in every state
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under the sun, government ever has and ever will be supported and opposed by parties. But surely there is some difference between a party and a faction. A party ever pursues national ends, whilst all the views of a faction are directed towards the attainment of offices and emolument for themselves : *Immane quantum discrepat!* When the Duke of Portland formed a political league with Mr. Fox, it is but candid to suppose, that he intended to support that gentleman only in what he deemed just and constitutional measures, and perhaps in the proposed subversion of that rival, against whom they had conceived that dislike which is too often entertained against fortunate success and superior abilities. But does it follow from the terms of this agreement, whether express or implied, that the noble Duke pledged himself to Mr. Fox to support him *per fas atque nefas* in all the schemes framed by disappointed ambition, and a low rage for popularity with the lowest classes of mankind? Suppose it possible, for argument's sake, that the Duke of Portland had agreed to foster all his friend's most desperate plans, I am well assured that a gentleman of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's religious and philosophical attainments must well know, that the Duke of Portland, both as a freeholder of Great Britain, and a peer of the realm, is bound by all the ties of morality to contribute (*quibus sciet poteritque*) to its happiness ; and that all agreements entered into in derogation to our duties towards God, are invalid in proportion as they militate against the divine commands : Suppose it possible then, for argument's sake, that the noble Duke

Duke entered into the most eccentric of Mr. Fox's designs, it was his duty to repent and turn as soon as possible from his evil ways, and the sooner the better.

'Tis rather singular that whilst the Duke of Portland supported Mr. Fox, our patriots showered down upon him the most fulsome and indiscriminate applauses; in short, his Grace was the Stoic of Horace:

—Dives quî sapiens est,
Et futor bonus & solus formosus & est rex.

But now, since the Duke has ceased to act with Mr. Fox, no reproaches are beneath his deserts; and now, forsooth, he is threatened with lasting damnation for asserting what is deemed self-evident by nine tenths of the good people of England.

I have been ever instructed, that the spirit of our constitution is the rule of conduct which every public man should prescribe to himself, the compass by which he should steer his political course; but in the censures here inflicted on his Grace of Portland, in the room of the spirit of our constitution, Mr. Gilbert Wakefield substitutes the whim and caprice of Mr. Fox. Should I at any future time obtain a seat in parliament, and should the Empress of Russia endeavour to overthrow the balance of Europe by encroaching on the side of Oczakow; were I to apply to my good friend Mr. Gilbert Wakefield for advice, he would direct me to vote in such a manner as to give full scope to the autocrator Catherine's ambition, because it would gratify Mr. Fox. Should a lawless
banditti,

banditti, headed by some modern Spartacus, threaten every region of the civilized globe with havoc and devastation, he would not recommend me to take all possible precautions for the safety of my country, because Charles James Fox has been created a citizen of France. When we see the treatment which his Grace of Portland now experiences from those who formerly extolled him as the quintessence of perfection, I am sure we shall be naturally led to paraphrase a certain old proverb in a certain old book :

Put not your confidence in patriots, nor in the sons of reform *.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield † wishes to know by what humanity the Rev. Mr. Palmer is put into irons,

* Let the Duke of Bedford, Lords Albemarle and Thanet, and Mr. Lambton, beware. Perhaps they imagine that, by joining themselves to the popular party, they may be able to direct its course, and to prevent its proceeding to the abolition of rank and the equalization of property. Let them banish so groundless an idea. Let them reflect how Essex, Manchester, and Fairfax, were erected as idols of puritanical worship, in the year 1640, and how quickly they were overturned, as soon as by stepping on their shoulders Cromwell had seized the sceptre and mounted the throne. Surely, 'tis no compliment on the understandings of peers of the realm to say that they are made use of, like the paws of the cat in the fable, to get chefnuts out of the fire. I trust that soon they will perceive that, in perilous times like these, the hands of the executive must be strengthened, and that, to use a judicious expression of Baron Montesquieu, "there are cases in which a veil should be drawn for a while over liberty, as it was customary to veil the statues of the gods."

† Page 18, note.

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and sent to prosecute his *theological studies* at Botany Bay?

The first question which naturally presents itself is this, Whence arises the right of punishing individuals, which we all allow to be inherent in sovereignty? It arises not immediately from the nature of virtue and vice: From the hands of the Almighty we are taught to expect a retribution of so much chastisement for so much moral turpitude; but with what plea of justice can a human judge inflict punishment in a similar manner? Is he himself free from all imputations of guilt, or has he not rather, as being one of us, his imperfections? *Narratur & prisca Catonis sæpe mero caluisse virtus.* From this source then an answer to our question cannot be derived, and we must seek it from some other. God wills the happiness of his creatures; this cannot be secured unless such as contribute their mite to destroy it be made examples henceforth to deter men of depraved dispositions from attempting similar enormities, and unless rulers be made a terror unto evil works. No consistent legislator ever gives a right without a corresponding remedy; God therefore permits us to have recourse to punishment only when it is necessary to general utility, and, in fact, the execution of a criminal is only amputating a part for the benefit of the whole. Punishments should (as the moral and judicious Paley well observes) be inflicted in a ratio compounded of the danger of the consequences, which would have ensued the success of the crime, and the incentives which there may be hereafter to

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the perpetrating *quiddam simile*. Let us now apply this rule to the case under consideration, and let us suppose that the designs of Messrs. Muir, Palmer, Skirving, &c. had been successful, and that the common people had espoused the cause of the Edinburgh Convention.

Nothing is more easy, nothing stands less in need either of bodily strength or manual dexterity, than to set fire to a train of gunpowder ; this is a function which may be as well performed by a blundering chambermaid, as by the most experienced engineer. But when once the fatal torch is applied, who can prevent the explosion from taking place ? Who can arrest the sudden shock ? Who can divert destruction from the devoted town ?

It is, I believe, rather a difficult task to change the tendency of those natural effects which ensue from natural causes. Notwithstanding the manifold improvements of this enlightened age, I have not heard that any member, either of the Manchester or Philadelphian Philosophical Societies, has as yet devised a plan for altering the constituent properties of the universe, or organizing anew the moral and material worlds. It remains to make the application : I will do it in the words of Mr. Hooker :

“ He that goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, will never want attentive and favourable hearers, because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regimen is subject ; but the secret lets and difficulties, which in public proceedings are innumerable

numerable and inevitable, they have ordinarily the judgment to consider *."

Ραδιον μὲν γὰρ πολὺν σείσαι

Καὶ φαυροτέροις, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ χώρας

αὐδὺς εἶσσαι δυσπαλες

δη γινεται ἐξαπινας. Pyth. Ode 4. Pind.

To persuade the common people that they are unhappy, requires no great stock of abilities, since there is an innate restlessness and peevishness in human nature, and since those, who have not received the benefit of a good education, are apt to be deceived by a rigmarole of names, to be cheated out of their real interests, and to be egged on to rush down the precipice of self-destruction. It is a task which may be as well performed by Tom Paine, as by the Right Hon. Edmund Burke. But the advocates for insurrection would do well to consider that though they can conjure up the accursed fiend, that *bellua centiceps*, Rebellion, they cannot draw the line; they may say, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther; but, alas! their words will have no more effect than those celebrated injunctions which Canute laid upon the waters of the ocean. Who knows the consequences of a thorough commotion of the people? We may rest morally certain that they are supremely calamitous, from considering the serious train of disasters which attend even a partial insurrection; but from the latter we can scarcely frame an idea of the vast immensity of the former. The celebrated Junius well observes, that, "wide is the distance between a

* Ecclesiastical Polity, book i. sect. 1.

riot of the populace and a convulsion of the whole kingdom." In the latter case

———*Flammæ furentes*

Culmina perque hominum voluntur, perque deorum.

That the intent of the Edinburgh Convention was to procure a general commotion of the people, I appeal to the avowed end for which it was instituted, to the speeches made by several members, which are upon record, to the papers which were circulated by them: And these are the *theological studies* of Mr. Palmer. I hope the reality of the dangers which would have followed the success of the Rev. Gentleman's plans is sufficiently evident. It remains to prove the incentives which there are for imitating the conduct of him and his associates.

That there are men wicked enough to break through every ordinance of religion, to overturn every establishment of man, however indispensably requisite it may be to the peace and happiness of society, is a truth which is corroborated but by too frequent experience: How many have waded through seas of blood, how many have traversed mountains of iniquity, whilst journeying towards power and pre-eminence! And indeed in that dreadful situation of affairs, which I endeavoured to pourtray just above, the successful demagogue is the only one on whom fortune seems to smile. Whilst the prelates of the church, and the hereditary nobility of the land, men eminent for their piety and valour, are forced to flee like culprits from the fury of a roused rabble, these men are rioting in luxury and wantonness:

Whilst

Whilst those, whose sex by all but barbarians is deemed a sufficient protection both from injury and insult, and whom education, rank, and one perpetuated gale of prosperity, have kept utterly unacquainted with the greater part of the evils which are without, have not a hole wherein to lay their heads; these audacious, these lucky villains, are indulging themselves in the sensual gratification of every depraved appetite. In one word, the successful demagogue cajoles a miserable people with the huzzas of equality, and rules them with the rod of oppression. Is not the prospect of emerging from obscurity, of realizing the most sanguine dreams of ambition, of trampling on the necks of those, who at present deem *him* too contemptible to honour with their notice, a sufficient incentive for any clever daring journeyman printer to set up for a patriot, to lecture upon taxes, harangue upon grievances, disseminate hand-bills, foment disorders, and endeavour, as far as in him lies, to dissolve the bonds of society? and then adieu to sweet tranquillity and amiable security, perhaps *for ever*. No one, I am sure, who justly appreciates these considerations, the dangers which threatened this empire from the plans of Mr. Palmer and his associates, and which would certainly have been realized, had those nefarious plots succeeded; that to render a populace discontented is no very difficult task, and that the incentives to the attempt are many and weighty with men who despise the voice of the charmer, and stifle the suggestions of conscience; no one, I am sure, who justly appreciates

ciates these considerations, will deem the punishment of these Conventionists oppressive or unnecessary, with however copious a share of the milk of human nature he may be blessed. No man, I am sure, who reflects that the right of punishing arises from general utility, from the facility of perpetrating crimes, and the incentives which there are to perpetration, can say, *bonâ fide*, that the Scotch judges exerted their authority wantonly or tyrannically.

But whatever may have been the aims and intentions of these gentlemen, a new plea in arrest of judgment is set up before the bar of public opinion by their advocates, who are now forced to quit the general justice of the sentence. These men, forsooth, ought not to be sent to Botany Bay, because they have received a liberal education. This newly invented benefit of clergy does honour to the sophistry of Dr. Priestley's understanding, for he, if I mistake not, is the deviser of this argument. I have always been instructed that it is a principal excellence of the British constitution, that its code is no respecter of persons. This regulation has always hitherto been reckoned a leading member of those equitable principles,

— ὦν Ολυμπος

Παῖρ μόνος, κθενιν θνατᾶ

φυσίς ἀνερῶν εἰκλεν, κδε

Μιν ποτε λαθα καλαχοιμασει.

Μεγας εν τῆλοισ θεος,

κδε γηρασκει. Soph. Œdip. Tyr. 886.

But French equality is, it seems, the direct reverse of that established in Britain. All who have any
sense

sense of the duty which they owe to their God and their king; all who wish to heal the wounds of their bleeding country, and to compose those dissensions which prey on its vitals; these are all murdered with *equal* barbarity and inhumanity: But those whose crimes call down loudly for vengeance from heaven, who render Nero, when compared to them, a mild philosopher, and Domitian a spotless saint, are rewarded in proportion to the immanity of their conduct: And those, whose carcases after their decease, amidst any civilized nation, would have stunk upon a gibbet, are interred in pantheons, and canonized in calendars.

This is French equality, this is the equitable ratio, in which punishments and rewards are distributed; and this the advocates for Messrs. Muir and Palmer recommend to our imitation. The liberal education of these culprits is a mere pretence; the real reason why Dr. Priestley and his coadjutors desire their indemnity is the atrocity of the crimes which they wished to perpetrate. But the faction knows not the difficulties which stand in its way, before it can here introduce its favourite system of France. Every honest Englishman will exclaim, in the words of Crassus, *Prius hæc tibi est excidenda lingua, quâ vel evulsâ spiritu ipso libidinem tuam libertas mea refutabit.* I have read the Trial of Mr. Muir, and my heart bled for the frailties of human nature, when I reflected that a man, *gifted* as he is, could descend to practices which justly place him upon a level with the common house-breaker, and the common murderer. I wish not to triumph over the fallen foe, but leave him to the

consolations of his conscience, and the remorse which must arise in his mind, when he contrasts what he is with what he might have been.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield * forebodes “ that the last race of church dignitaries are slumbering in their stalls and palaces;” in which elegant and figurative period he implies, I presume, a probable downfall of the established church of England.

Towards the close of the tenth century, an opinion got abroad that the end of the world was approaching, and deluded wretches rushed by thousands into Palestine, that they might meet their Lord at his coming, in the place which he had sanctified by his labour and his sufferings, and there perished amidst inhospitable deserts and burning sands, a prey to their own ignorance and delusion. The world, it may be worth while to remark, has gone on in its old way, though it is now five or six hundred years since its final conclusion was announced to be at hand. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield’s prophecy of the catastrophe of our national church is equally likely, in all human probability, to be accomplished as that which I have just mentioned, for I trust, that “ there is a fund of good sense in this country which cannot long be deceived by the arts either of false patriotism, or false reasoning †.” I trust that the people of England see through the flimsy arts of those who not only wish to destroy the frame of church

* Page 21.

† Letter to Junius, ascribed to Sir William Blackstone, then Solicitor-general to her Majesty.

government established at present amongst us, but will not suffer any regulation to subsist, which may tend to the inculcating the doctrines of Christianity into the common people, and delivering the dictates of morality from a place whose sanctity (whether real or supposed, it is not here my business to argue) gives them an additional efficacy, who wish not only to overthrow the British constitution, but every system of government, which is not founded on those infallible principles of liberty and free investigation, the pike and the guillotine.

To imagine, that the human breast can ever be totally divested of curiosity, is highly absurd; and no one endowed with a grain of common sense can think it his duty to lay aside all anxiety with regard to futurity, and all consideration of what consequences are likely to result from any particular event. But I know not any conduct more impious, or foolish, than to endeavour to remove the brazen veil which God has been pleased to spread before the face of futurity, to pry into the secrets of the Most Highest, and to discover those rules which he has proposed to himself in the moral government of the world.

Let us rather rest assured, that, so long as we remain a people zealous of good works, the Good Being will never withdraw from us his countenance and protection. He is not, as Dr. Priestley and Mr. Gilbert Wakefield represent him, like the gods of the Heathens; he does not destroy his people through whim, or slay them through caprice; his authority (as my Lord Bolingbroke happily expresses it) is li-

mitted by the rules which infinite goodness has prescribed to infinite power. Let no forced constructions put upon Scripture prophecies terrify us out of acting wisely and manfully; let no puritanical omens induce us to believe that it is pre-destined above, that the anarchy which has arisen in France should spread itself over all Europe, and swallow up every vestige of good order and tranquillity.

With regard to the expediency of a national church in general, were I to dilate at length the arguments which may be adduced in favour of it, I should only trespass upon the patience of the Public for a longer time than I have a right to claim their attention. The subject has been so often and so ably discussed, and the treatises containing these discussions are so easy for all men to obtain, that I have only mentioned the subject, that I might profess my firm and unqualified assent to the open, manly declaration of the *Iron Barons* at Runnymede: *Sit Ecclesia Anglicana libera, atque habeat jura omnia sua intemerata, atque libertates suas illasas.* Long may she continue to rear her mitred front in parliament; long may she continue to be at once supported and adorned by men like those who fill at present her exalted departments, with credit to themselves, and with honour to their country.

But I have another charge to bring against Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, which not only tends to prove the real purport of his publication, but the unpolished roughness of his manners, and the bitter malignity of his heart. Because he differs in opinion from the
clergy

clergy of the established Church of England, is it necessary to load them with reproaches, and overwhelm them with abuse? But in this part of his production our Author seems to have forgot the comparative situations, and comparative characters, of himself and the objects of his censure: Passion so far misleads him, envy so far blinds him, that he does not perceive that he is biting against a file. The clergy of England do not blow the trumpet of civil dissension, nor espouse the cause of commotions and massacres, but recommend to their congregations, peace, loyalty, and tranquillity. They do not endeavour to apply to a bad purpose the influence which they command with the lower classes of society, by inspiring them with prejudices against their superiors, and instilling into their minds the shockingly misanthropic idea, that the general spirit of the country is Antichristian; they, on the contrary, preach up charity the most universal, and Christian love the most unbounded. Like the Bramins of India, these good men “quit not the silence of their retreats, to mingle in the tumults of the state, nor point the brand flaming from the altar against the authority of the sovereign, or the tranquillity of the government*.”

If,

* Hist. of India, vol. i. page 178.—Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, in one part of his philanthropic production, presumes to censure the conduct of this country in Hindostan, without seeming to understand any thing about the matter: It is one of the proofs which he adduces of our Antichristianism, most of which are erected but upon a sandy foundation. Let me recommend to his perusal this

If, at some particular conjuncture, the uncommon pains taken at conventicles to make the people discontented, render it necessary for these men to inculcate from their pulpits the sin of resisting those powers which are ordained of God, and the doctrines of rational obedience, they do it in a style so liberal, so manly, and so plain, that by every good man they are heard with deference, by every wise man with assent.

There is among them a prelate, who has equally endeared himself to the Christian community at large, by the spirit and ability with which he defends the fundamentals of its religion, when attacked by sophisticated licentiousness; to the people of England, by the honest zeal and flashing conviction with which he stands forth the champion of subordination and establishment; to the friends of humanity, by the glorious affiduity and unaffected eloquence with which he pleads the cause of the suffering clergy of France, and the real liberality with which he runs to succour a brother minister of Jesus Christ in distress, overlooking the narrow impediments of different sentiments on doctrinal points, and affording us a bright example of that bright original, "the good Samaritan."

I need not say that this feeble sketch is meant to convey an idea of the Bishop of Rochester, nor need

perspicuous and elegant work, which at once vindicates the honour of the British name, and constitutes an important addition to British literature, whilst it acquires for its truly able and respectable author, my much-esteemed friend Mr. Orme, that reputation to which he is so justly entitled.

I men-

I mention the sensations which I felt when I first read Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's character of him. But when I recollected that this great and good man is blessed with the merited favour of his sovereign, and the well-earned veneration of his countrymen, and on the other hand, that Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's malevolence, though great, is equalled only by his impotence, I thought even his infamous quotation from Milton rather adapted for exciting the smile of contempt, than kindling the spark of indignation.

I cannot quit this head, without transcribing a passage from the will of the celebrated Sir William Petty: "As for religion, I die in the profession of that faith, and in the practice of that worship, which I find established by the laws of my country; not being able to believe what I myself please, nor to worship God better than by doing what I would be done unto, and observing the laws of my country, and expressing my love and honour to Almighty God by such signs and tokens as are understood to be such by the people with whom I live, God knowing my heart without any at all *."

* I seize every possible opportunity of paying a tribute of respect to the memory of this truly great and good man. If a rational and far from servile obedience to constituted authorities; if the application of the purest of hearts and the clearest of heads to the public service; if improving, in a signal manner, those sciences which produce the most real utility to a state; if a strict adherence to the regulations of morality and decorum—if these be virtues, Sir William Petty was the most respectable of mortals; and more truly ennobles his descendants, than if the united blood of Ferrars and Vere ran through their veins.

Mr.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield * ascribes the enormities of the French republicans to the armies that have invaded their territories, and is pleased to term their crimes *occasional and incidental, effects unhappy from a generous cause.*

We live in an age, which presents to our view a singular and unusual phenomenon—a set of beings who call themselves philosophers †, dissolving the bond of social union, and freeing the minds of their subjects from all scruples on the score of religion—a set of beings, who call themselves men, murdering the unprotected widow, after having inflicted upon her indignities more cutting, and cruelties more exquisite, than Nero had ever malice to invent, or Domitian ferocity to execute. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield is resolved that his friends shall not stand alone; the contradiction being unimitated, he supposes may

* Page 25.

† As if political philosophy consisted in the avowing sentiments diametrically opposite to those which have stood the test of ages, and so far from being called into question, have ever been taken *pro confectis* by the best and the wisest of mankind; as if theological philosophy consisted in idle and impious attempts to trace the ways of Providence, and substitute restless diffidence and painful anxiety, for manly confidence and liberal tranquillity. This cursed system has brought forth to Rousseau the race of men at present ruling in France:

—αὐεὺ δ' οἱ χαρίων τέκε

Γόνον υπερφιαλον

Μονα καὶ μονον, εἴ' ἐν ἀνδράσι

γερασφορον, εἴ' ἐν θεῶν νομοῖς.

Pind. Pyth. Ode ii.

cast

cast a tacit imputation on their merits. Impressed with a desire (praiseworthy in the extreme!) of introducing French principles in Britain, he displays in his conduct a contrast equally glaring, and as irreconcilable to common consistency as it is to common humanity: A man, who one moment styles himself *a lowly, insignificant, conscientious follower of Jesus Christ*; at another stands forth the avowed champion of unparalleled proscriptions, and the professed palliator of murder and assassinations. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that the combined powers had *hunted the French down like beasts for the slaughter*, and see how far this fact, when assumed, tends to extenuate their massacres and devastations. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield will readily grant, I trust, that there are maxims of conduct enjoined by the Creator of the universe for man to observe, from the performance of which none but God himself can grant him a dispensation; since it requires at least the same degree of power to cancel a moral obligation, as was exerted in the creating it.

How far any treacherous and unwarrantable interference on the part of the combined powers with the internal affairs of France, or any menaces from them whatever, however sanguinary and terrific, justify the National Convention in their deeds of desolation, and their exploits of murder, I shall not pretend to argue; but leave the discussion to Mr. Gilbert Wakefield and his associates, who endeavour to throw down those barriers which the moral sense has erected between virtue and vice, and to demonstrate good to be

be evil, and evil good. We can excuse the peevish child, whose little impotent passions, roused by the idea of Raw-head and Bloody-bone's arrival, wreak their vengeance upon a doll, or a go-cart; but I know not what apology can be devised for legislators, who, by any concatenation of circumstances whatever, suffer reason and judgment to be banished from their breasts, and who permit those mansions to be inhabited as dwelling-places by phrenzy and blood-thirstiness, which ought to be the temples of justice and righteousness, of coolness and impartiality.

In the late unhappy contention between Great Britain and her Colonies (I wish it to be understood that it is not my intention to repeat old grievances, by entering into the merits of the case), the part acted by France was undoubtedly perfidious and iniquitous in the extreme; neither her interests, nor the interests of the allies, nor the interests of Europe, were implicated in the quarrel; the only reasons, which could possibly have induced her to conduct herself in such a manner, were views of self-aggrandizement, and the base desire of circumventing a foe, whom she dared not to meet *aperto Marte*—a foe, who had ever behaved as a generous enemy, by sparing after conquest, and granting equitable terms of peace after victory. Surely a shock so unexpected, so vexatious as this, if we allow the doctrine of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield to hold good, would have justified a degree of raving madness on the part of the British parliament superior to that of Hercules when enveloped in the poisoned shirt. I do not know, that
any

any of those unhappy victims in France, to the generous cause of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, ever publicly demonstrated their joy, when news arrived of the successes of Austria; though it is natural to suppose that men must rejoice at the approximation of that event, which promises to restore them to the honours and possessions of their ancestors. It is a well-authenticated fact, that at that calamitous period to which I have referred just above, a Right Hon. Gentleman, bright in the annals of senatorial fame, publicly exulted in the defeats of his country, and triumphed in the successes of her enemies. Did the parliament of Great Britain appeal against this man to the rabble which was passing through Palace-yard? Did the members halloo out to the tinkers and barrow-women of Westminster, "Citizens, this man is a *Feuillant*, a *Moderat*?" (or any other new-coined appellation.) The British parliament justly considered, that no distresses whatever could apologise for an useless breach of the laws of morality, and that the want of success, or the gloomy aspect of their affairs, was not a plea which would avail at God's bar hereafter so far as to justify *their giving full scope to all the prejudices and passions of outraged humanity*. Yet, forsooth, Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, with a fastidious daintiness peculiar to himself, censures the spirit of the times in England as Anti-christian: What then must be the spirit of the times in France? It must be what I have ever described it, sanguinary and ferocious beyond the powers of language; entirely devoid of all those gentle affections, which emphatically

are styled the milk of human nature, and which serve to distinguish the noblest work of creation from the beasts that rove over the fields. How truly weak is the cause of sedition, how little avail abilities the most splendid when misapplied; since even an author raw, inexperienced, and deficient as I am, is able to turn the principal battery of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield's fortification against himself, and out of his own mouth to convict him!

I should be glad to know, how Mr. Gilbert Wakefield makes out his charge, of exciting the crimes of the French, against either the ministry, the parliament, or the people of this country? When imputations are cast upon bodies of men respectable as these, it is either necessary that the misdemeanours alleged should be proved in their utmost extent, or that the party, who gives to the Public, pledges of prosecution, and then, unable to substantiate his charges, drops all farther mention of them, should sit down for the remainder of his life with the reputation of a common incendiary. If, to express our detestation for crimes already perpetrated, be a cause sufficient to provoke the guilty to the perpetration of fresh crimes, I hope my country will ever continue to make use of this provocative. The moral sense, or a power of distinguishing between virtue and vice, is by far the noblest prerogative of human nature; nor can I see, I must confess, any tolerable reason why its use should be suspended, or forbid, because the French Convention thought proper to seize upon the property of the church, to authorise general
massacres,

massacres, and to immure their sovereign and his family in a prison. Plutarch tells us, that the Argives having put to death fifteen hundred of their citizens, the Athenians ordered sacrifices of expiation, that it might please the gods to turn the hearts of their citizens from so cruel a thought. This, I imagine, is perfectly similar to the conduct of Great Britain, so long as the horrid crimes of the French were merely of a domestic tendency, and did not threaten the repose and tranquillity of Europe *. Had the aim of our war been to avenge the death of the King of France, whether we consider the matter in a view of right, or a view of policy, five shillings spent, or a drop of blood spilt, in the quarrel, would be too much; but whatever additional cruelties the present war may cause to be inflicted on the few honest men who are at present resident in France, we must persevere in it, if we wish to keep the rapacious hands of French liberty from our possessions, and the bloody dagger of French equality from our throats.

I doubt not but the Convention would be equally bloody and unrelenting, although France was not engaged in a war, and that Mr. Gilbert Wakefield would good-naturedly devise some apology for his friends' conduct, equally satisfactory and ingenious

* *Stet fortuna domûs, & avi numerentur avorum.*

For God's sake let the royal and illustrious dynasty of Robespierre long continue seated upon the throne of the Bourbons; but whatever may be the fate of France, may England never be added to that devoted region as an 85th department, and may Europe be rescued from desolation!

as the one which we have been here investigating.

Government * is instituted to ensure the happiness of those who are subject to it; and protection is in as full a sense the duty of the sovereign, as allegiance is of the people. The monstrous doctrine, of the many being made for the one, is now, thank God, sufficiently exploded: "It abdicated Westminster-hall, when James the Second abdicated his kingdom." But, alas! the common people seldom do things by halves: "Sometimes with a hundred thousand feet they creep like insects, and sometimes with a hundred thousand arms they overturn all before them." The doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the courtly position, "*A Deo rex, a rege lex*," are succeeded by *the sovereign majesty of the people*, and the Rag-fair bluster, "All men are equal." But however violent the current of popular opinion may be set in any particular direction; whatever pains may be taken by the worthless emissaries of sedition to prejudice the deluded peasant and the blinded mechanic, against those who are *really* their best friends; surely no man of honour will be deterred from endeavouring to undeceive them, even though life itself, together with all its comforts and conveniences, be risked in the attempt.

From the definition of government laid down above, it naturally ensues, that the best frame of it is that which makes the most effectual provisions for

the security both of civil and political liberty. Let me now, after the example of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, ask two questions:—Will any one pretend to say, that by the government at present established in England any unnecessary restraints are laid upon the natural liberties of mankind? Is any one, except a few snarling, discontented Puritans, at all apprehensive that the legislature of England is base enough to offer up privilege on the shrine of prerogative, or to remove those wholesome barriers, which former ages have so wisely and so justly erected against the inordinate exertion of regal authority?

I write not to convince such men as I have excepted above; this would be a task truly impracticable, were my abilities to surpass the mental powers of a Newton, were my eloquence to be more impressive than the oratory of a Demosthenes; as well might I attempt to replenish the buckets of the Danaides with water, as to imbue the breasts of the Puritans with the principles of tranquillity and contentment. The mention of these men has transported me beyond the bounds of regularity, and I perceive that I have been widely straying from my subject. If the British constitution protect every man in the free enjoyment of the comforts and conveniences of life; if it afford to honest industry and virtuous emulation the means of exalting themselves to the summit of affluence and glory; if it effectually provide, that no portion of any man's property be taken from him, unless by a solemn act of a legislature, whose constituent parts are such, that no man, who is neither educated in
Hob-

Hobbefian philosophy, or Priestleian divinity, can doubt their integrity—that no man, who is capable of framing an idea, can doubt their experience—or by the verdict of an impartial jury of his equals; if the British constitution make no diftinction between men of different religious perfuafions, but fuch as are neceffary for its own prefervation; if all who live in fubjection to it, are tried by one fame equal code of laws, enacted previoufly to the offence, and which knows not the perfon of the culprit; and if thefe corner-ftones of freedom and fecurity are irrepealable by the known customs of the land; I think we may venture to affert, that it is a good constitution, although its territories are not cantoned out with arithmetical precision into departments; although its months retain their good old Saxon appellations, and are not fantaftically diftributed into *Vindemiaires* and *Brumaires*; although that day, when light arofe to difpel darknefs, and when angels proclaimed redemption to loft mankind, be not ftigmatized with a term of infamy and reproach; although prostitutes are not led in folemn proceffion along the ftreets of its metropolis; although its yeomen be not diftinguifhed by a term which puts decency to the blufh, and which indicates an unrivalled licentioufnefs of imagination.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield asks me, whether the prefent Houfe of Commons is a representation of the people? I make anfwer, that it is a body of men, eminent for all the good qualities both of the head and of the heart, and as irreproachable an affembly as can be collected together fo long as the human
cha.

character is chequered and diversified with different proportions of ability and imperfection, of virtue and vice ; that knowing itself to be that branch of the legislature, to which the people are directed to look up as the more immediate guardian of its constitutional liberties, and the mouth-piece of its just and proper requests, the House of Commons ever listens to that part of the nation, which has no direct voice in the enacting of laws, with peculiar deference and respect, and never rejects its proposals, unless when these are *primâ facie* inimical to the interests, and derogatory to the dignity of the empire ; unless when they are not so much the real sentiments of the people, as the lessons instilled into uninstructed minds by the emissaries of sedition.

One principal reason why the ancient republics of Greece and Rome so often fell under the usurpation of tyrants, and ended in settled despotism, is the nature and constitution of the body, which enacted the *plebiscita*. The gardener, whose principal occupation consists in watering his cabbage-ground ; the taylor (of whose life that season, which in higher situations is dedicated to education, is spent in learning to manage the needle with dexterity), can neither of them be supposed to have acquired that *just discernment of spirits*, which is the principal ingredient in the composition of a true statesman ; or, in other words, to have collected a fund of political knowledge adequate to the appreciating the real characters and actual designs of those, who, outwardly arrayed in white robes, set up as candidates for public applause. *Falso liber-*

libertatis vocabulum obtendi ab iis, qui privatim degeneres, in publicum exitiosi, nil spei nisi per discordias habent, is a forcible censure on professions of patriotism, which cannot be extenuated by the united bellowings of the whole party. Surely I need not inform the Author of the *Sylva Critica*, that the text is in Tacitus, I will tell him where to look for the commentary—in the hearts of some of his associates. That an assembly consisting of statesmen taken from the plough, or the anvil, is not a match for men of open professions and dark designs, in whose lips dwell justice and freedom, but nothing less so in their hearts, is a position which the advocates for reform must concede to me, unless they can prove that experience is innate, and that the power of reading, as it were, other men's thoughts, does not result from education, and a thorough acquaintance with the history of past ages.

We all well know the story of Pisistratus; in the beginning, like Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Grey, he blustered about the sovereign majesty of the people, about equal rights, arbitrary measures, undue influence, universal suffrage, and a long bundle of such-like squibs, which the patriots of one age hand down ready cut and dried to those of another—toward the conclusion, like Cromwell and Fiennes, he trampled upon the constitution of his country. The reason of his success is obvious.

He had not to deal with men whose judgments had been ripened by education, and enabled to cope with the cunning schemes and the wily stratagems of

of iniquity. Such men, before they granted his impudent request to be allowed a guard for the safety of his person, would have argued somewhat in this way: "This man tells us, that a party, to which he is rendered obnoxious by his zeal for the public good, have made attempts upon his life, and displays those wounds which he tells us are the fruits of his disinterested services as a citizen. On those, who have dared in so flagrant a manner to violate the primary laws of society, exemplary punishment should be inflicted; as for Pisistratus himself, since his wounds are not mortal, which may be easily perceived from the elegant, studied harangue just pronounced, a private compensation may be made him, which, together with an additional degree of veneration from his fellow-citizens, is as much as any good man can require, and a bad man deserves not so much. His request to be allowed a guard, surprises us in good truth: *Latet anguis in herbâ*. It is to be hoped that the laws already enacted in this state, are not so inefficacious in principle, are not so relaxed in execution, as to be unable to protect a peaceable citizen from the dagger of assassination; but, at all events, it is far better that Pisistratus, even if we suppose his intentions to be pure and immaculate in the extreme (which this his request renders rather dubious), should die ten thousand deaths, than that we should give up, *prudentes scientesque*, the firmest security of Athenian liberty, by permitting an individual to levy an army, which must necessarily, from the very nature of things, be under the direction of

him who pays and officers it, and of which the interest must be in direct opposition to that of the republic, than that we should sanction a practice, which if, by the greatest good luck imaginable, it does not at present subvert the state, may hereafter be drawn into a precedent, and will finally usher in despotism and despair!"

This would have been the answer with which Pisistratus's impudent request would have met, had it been addressed to a parliament constituted as ours.

A Mansfield, a Grenville, a Burke, a Pitt, and a Wyndham, would easily have penetrated into Pisistratus's design, would have unmasked the villain, and laid him open to public censure, and public contempt. But the petition was not presented to an assembly of *courtiers* and *placemen*; it was presented to a national convention, constituted upon the darling plan of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield. On minds which have never been improved by education, we well know what a wonderful impression is made by *spectacles*. This convention could not resist the mistaken sentiments of pity which were excited by the appearance of one whom, from his loud professions, they foolishly imagined to be their real friend in distress; without giving themselves time to enter into the merits of the case, without listening to the cautions, which certainly must have been given by the well-instructed few, under the impulse of passion, by one rash vote, they gave up, gracious heaven! all that was dear to them—all that

was

was precious to them as freemen—all that served to distinguish the Athenian citizen from the Persian slave.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, in short, wants a parliament, which being composed of men who are burdened with neither of those two troublesome qualifications, education and experience, who have nothing, or next to nothing at stake, may be both rash and negligent, which may be easily chaperoned over the vallies of absurdity, and escorted over the mountains of iniquity. With such a parliament as this, the party, I make no doubt, will do wonders.

But I forgot that I have to return thanks to Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, for the very explicit manner in which he lets me into the secret of the party. He openly avows his settled opinion, that what he calls an independent parliament is incompatible with the existence of monarchy; and he seems to mention this discovery with exultation. It plainly appears, upon the face of this strange and curious note, that the abolition of monarchy is part of the original scheme.

Now let us suppose, for argument's sake, that the consequences which attend the existence of regal authority, are not immediately productive of any signal and positive advantage; but that the inconveniences resulting from it are trifling and few: I will take upon me to assert, that the establishments of our ancestors ought to be adhered to, even when the reasons which gave rise to their original institution have partly, or in some cases wholly, ceased to have effect,

merely to keep the minds of the people in one settled train of thinking, and to prevent their contracting, from habitual exercise, an attachment to innovations, and a hankering after revolutions.

There are many men, who enjoy in large proportions the blessings of health, character, domestic happiness, wealth, and renown, and yet never think of gratefully acknowledging the obligations under which they lay to that God, who confers on them these advantages. In like manner you, my countrymen, set down, each peaceably under his vine-tree, and contrast the state of affairs in France with the situation of your own country; and too many of you, I fear, do not give yourselves the trouble to reflect, that the happiness of which you partake, and the freedom from anxiety which plays around your hearts, result from that wise, that manly, that steady conformity with which you have hitherto adhered to the institutions of your wise Bacons, and your brave Raleighs.

When one total change of constitution has taken place, and when the new-fangled metetricious system of a Rousseau, or a Voltaire, is erected, in the room of the ancient solid structure of a Clovis, or a Cerdic, the people, as vain of their talents as a girl of sixteen is of her beauty, wish to display the versatility and resources of their genius, at making and unmaking, at least a dozen times over and over again. They have now none of those prejudices, which flow from antiquity, for the existing constitution; defects are suggested to them by those who wish to supplant the favourites of the day; remedies tending to make

bad worse are tumultuously adopted, and as tumultuously carried into execution; and the amazing celerity with which Mirabeau, Fayette, Brissot, and Danton, successively make their entrances and their exits, can only be compared to the concise prospectus of the kings of Scotland, which Mr. Kemble affords to the spectators of that doleful tragedy, Macbeth.

Supposing, as I stated above, only for argument's sake, that monarchy is merely defensible, as an old institution, productive immediately neither of good nor bad consequences of any moment, let us hear how Baron Montesquieu pleads the cause of prescription in our ancestors: "Retrench but one of these habits, and you overturn the state."

But I trust that every truly good citizen sees some peculiar and forcible reasons why monarchy should not be abolished; when he considers that this goodly tree has pleasantly shaded our island for upwards of a thousand years, and that Englishmen, by feeding on the wholesome fruit, have acquired a degree of vigour, and a frame of mind, which justly exalts this country to the first rank amidst the nations of the earth; when he reflects how abortive proved all the efforts of a Milton and a Ludlow towards the middle of the last century, which were directed to the framing a republic, and when he turns his eyes towards that awful lesson which I trust will prove a salutary admonition to every nation in the world,

Injurioso ne pede proruat
Stantem columnam, neu populus frequens
Ad arma cessantes ad arma vocet,
Imperiumque frangat.

When

When our good citizen considers that no other frame of government has ever experienced success or duration in this country, although the attempt has been made, he will rest convinced that limited monarchy is best adapted to the national character of that generous people, who could neither brook the canting harangues of the hypocritical Vane, nor the dispensing power of the deluded James II. With peculiar satisfaction he will look towards the throne when he recollects that it is filled by a prince, who, to borrow a brilliant expression of Lord Grenville (no less to be admired for its solidity than for its animation), "has never yet, in any one instance, separated his rights, his interests, or his happiness, from the rights, from the interests, and from the happiness of his people." He will pray that his fellow-subjects and himself may long have the happiness to be governed by such a monarch, may long have an opportunity of imitating the conduct of such a man, and that God may long continue to give the King his judgments, and his righteousness to the King's sons. These will be our good citizen's prayers; not that he may obtain *any good sinecures, a Toulon pension, or at least a handsome gratuity privately conveyed*, but from a due sense of the comforts and happiness which he daily, nay hourly receives.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield lets us into the secrets of the faction with a degree of ingenuousness, or rather assurance, peculiar to himself—again and again I must thank him for it. He has now put us upon our guard by having given a most accurate definition

dition of that reform, which he and his friends are seeking to obtain. Their general characters omened no less. I much doubt whether even the internal purity of the Gospel would secure its success, were it propagated by such men as Dr. Priestley and his coadjutors.

This little paragraph of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield affords us an important lesson, if we are but willing to receive instruction. It is not the man that barks the loudest in the senate, that collects the largest mob about his heels, and throws the most troublesome obstacles in the way of those, on whom the administration of affairs is devolved, who has the most equitable pretensions to that exalted character, a real patriot: But it is the man who, unintimidated by the menace of a tyrant, unawed by the threats of a rabble, steadily pursues one grand object, which he incessantly proposes to himself as the scope to which all his actions aim—the welfare of his country.

Non ille pro caris amicis
Aut patriâ timidus perire.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield informs us * that, “ freedom of inquiry, so far from being challenged in confidence of the justice of their plans and the boasted purity of their constitution, is suppressed by the summary confutation of penalties and prosecutions. Argument is not opposed by argument, but repelled and silenced by fines and imprisonments.”

We have already detected the party in their misapplication of the terms *patriot* and *reform*; they

* Page 32.

are skilful hands with a vengeance in hammering out the *nova nomina rerum*. Perhaps the Public may be of opinion that Mr. Gilbert Wakefield does not affix the generally received idea to the term *free inquiry*, after we have fairly stated its true definition. I am not one of those (if any such there be) who applaud the wisdom and defend the justice of that imperial constitution, which forbids subjects to call in question the measures of ministers of state, upon the quaint supposition that it is sacrilege to doubt the propriety of his Majesty's choice. Let the principles and the practices of government be canvassed with attention and assiduity; it is necessary indeed that they should be so examined, since ministers are but men, and since the uncontrolled and uninspected exertion of too much power is liable to inebriate their minds, to dazzle their eyes, and to make them forget the duties of their offices.

But at the same time let the principles and practices of government be canvassed with decency and politeness. Junius himself allows that, "respect is due to the situation of ministers," for the common people, not able to separate the idea of government from the idea of the governors, naturally enough contract a disrespect for the former, when they hear the latter abused in language teeming with all the flowers of Billingsgate, with expressions such as we meet with, in sufficient abundance, in the pamphlet which we have at present under our review.

Let not the blow which is pretended to be aimed at an administration, which scribblers style "*unprincipled*"

principled in its character and injurious in its effects," be directed against the altar and the throne, against the primary establishments of society, the free enjoyment of property, and every thing that wears the face of regularity : Let us not, to avoid the imputation of stifling free inquiry, make the dangerous experiment of how much poison the minds of the common people can digest. The harm done by those low scrawls of immoral ribaldry which pollute the stalls of our metropolis is trifling, in comparison to the mischiefs produced by those insidious, those venomous publications, which, under the guise of freely investigating Mr. Pitt's administration, secretly attempt a total subversion of the British constitution. Books of the former class begin with an open avowal of their proposed obscenity, and consequently only attract the notice of those, whose moral principles, at least, are already depraved ; but those of the latter stamp set out with professions of sanctity and integrity, of candour and moderation, and of a desire to abolish party distinctions by cementing an union between all well-meaning men, on schemes built on justice and conducive to happiness. Professions like these are adapted to render readers well disposed to the cause, and to acquire for any treatise a speedy circulation.

The honest industrious mechanic, induced by a foolish vanity to imagine that reading *some good books* will soon make him as good a politician as Mr. Pitt or Mr. Wyndham, has recourse to some publication of this sort, and is prepossessed in its favour by the

pure disinterested spirit, which actuated the author, *as he says*, at the time of his writing it.

The measures proposed rather startle him at first, and perhaps, for a time, he lays aside the book, with a sincere resolution of never meddling with it more. But too often, alas! a sense of apparent advantage, after a few ineffectual struggles, prevails in direct opposition to known duty and real interest. He enrolls himself as a member of some one of those societies, which are erected for the purpose of cherishing the seeds of discontent in minds where they have been already sown by the publications of Paine and Gerald, of Priestley and Wakefield; and which, at this moment, loudly challenge from parliament animadversion and suppression. But let us attend our mechanic, metamorphosed into a Machiavel, through the remainder of his political progress. Entirely now engrossed by the new obligations which result from his new connexions, he neglects that trade, which formerly furnished his family and himself with the means of a sure and independent subsistence; the alternative of a convention or a jail stares him in the face, and drives him still more closely into the arms of that nefarious crew to which he has leagued himself: He becomes a party to its most desperate designs—If these succeed, he obtains, perhaps, a portion of spoils from the general plunder of property, but this he obtains at the expense of his peace of mind here, and his everlasting happiness hereafter; and he finds that instead of getting rid of the light and gentle yoke which formerly pressed upon

upon his neck, he has loaded himself with a burden too heavy to bear ; when some one who formerly called himself his brother and equal, now assumes the power of tyrant, though, perhaps, he vouchsafes to retain the name of citizen, and when the flighty schemes of visionary liberty sink into settled despotism. If, on the other hand, these designs prove abortive, our poor mechanic, perhaps, falls a necessary sacrifice to the justice of his insulted country. This picture exists not alone in my imagination, like those dreams of republican happiness and atheistical felicity, which never lived but in the distorted brains of Helvetius, and which only survive on his frothy page. The sombre traits of this picture are the melancholy circumstances which would attend that uncontrolled dissemination of political arsenic, which Mr. Gilbert Wakefield and his friends consecrate under the name of free inquiry. That Rev. Gentleman's Master tells him that " every tree shall be known by its fruits ;" sure I am, that a tree capable of producing fruits like these must itself be more deadly and pestilential than the celebrated tree of Japan ; which, like Robespierre, flourishes amidst the groans of the dying and the carcases of the dead.

I am conscious that Mr. Gilbert Wakefield and his associates will represent me as an enemy to free inquiry, and a hireling striving to write himself into bread. With as much justice might they style that man an enemy to the marriage establishment, the champion of anchorites, and the advocate for celi-

bacy, who expressed his aversion to that licentious mode of promiscuous concubinage, which makes an important article in the code of the Rights of Man. The charge specified above is equally conclusive as the latter. I am perfectly indifferent about *their* good opinion : Those who know me best know the esteem in which I hold the just freedom of the press ; they know that I deem it the palladium of the liberties of Englishmen, that it is my fervent prayer, that those liberties may prove immortal, and that nothing is farther from my thoughts, than, by a servile compliance to ministers, or any other set of men whatsoever, to disgrace a name whose possessor never yet bowed the knee, where he did not bend the heart, never yet meant one thing and told another.

Towards the middle of last century, when the Puritans were driving at the same ends as their worthy representatives are at present, their cant term was Delinquency, and this was the imputation thrown upon every man who had the courage to stand up for the just prerogatives of his sovereign, and the real welfare of his country. Mr. Gilbert Wakefield and his friends deem it a sacrifice necessary to be made to common decency, to change a few of the technical terms of those vengeful and sanguinary tyrants * the Cromwells, the Vanes, the Desboroughs, and

* I have at present before me an authentic tract, printed in the year 1662 : It is styled, " A brief Catalogue of the learned, grave, religious, and painful Ministers of Hampshire, who have been

and the Lamberts, though it is with reluctance that they depart from the most trivial of the institutions of their ancestors. For some reason or other it is evident that they have substituted apostacy for delinquency. Dereliction of former principles is the charge now brought by them against his Majesty's ministers, the stale argument which is had recourse to, as often as the steeple of a parish-church by the bell-ringers, by the numerous partisans of reform, from Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Grey, down to Tooke and Wakefield; from Tooke and Wakefield, down to the wretch that bellows a toast at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, or sets up a shout at Chalk Farm.

To this wretched threadbare invective they have recourse, in the senate to take up time, in their pub-

been imprisoned, plundered, and barbarously used, deprived of all Livelihood for themselves and their Families in the late Rebellion, for their Constancy in the Protestant Religion, and their Loyalty to their King under that grand Presbyterian Tyranny." In the county of Hampshire alone it appears that upwards of one hundred clergymen, exclusive of the dean and chapter, were persecuted with all that rancour which still characterises the descendants of the then victorious party. A deed, atrocious as this, affords full scope for the most unqualified censures and the most virulent invectives. But having stated the fact, I leave it to the Public to pass sentence upon these men, and to explain the professions of the Puritans of 1793, by the actions of the Puritans of 1648. To paraphrase a sentence of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, *I would give with rapture to the grand inquisitor of Spain, as purity and perfection, compared with these apostates to the liberty and sanctity of the Gospel, the right hand of fellowship. O my soul, come not thou into their secrets.*

lications to fill up paper, and in both to turn, if possible, the current of popular opinion against men, who, whatever may have been their former principles or practices, *at present* most undoubtedly deserve the esteem, and merit the thanks, of the Public, for the just and constitutional principles upon which they act, and for the spirited resolution with which they reduce these principles to practice.

Is it necessary that the cause of all the good people of England, that the cause of religion and civilization at large, should stand or fall by the merits of Mr. Pitt's general conduct, and general character, as a man? From the glee and exultation with which Mr. Gilbert Wakefield dilates on what he is pleased to term the apostacy of Mr. Pitt, one would imagine that this topic furnished a strong proof of the Antichristian spirit prevalent in this country, and a complete vindication of his good friends the French. But whether the conduct of Mr. Pitt, in the year 1782, be criminal or innocent, it makes nothing to the matter under consideration; so long as Mr. Pitt continues to act as he does at present, so long as he shows an honest and ardent zeal to maintain both the just prerogatives of the crown and the just privileges of the subject, the people of England, I doubt not, will give him their support; because, in supporting him, they preserve those liberties whence their principal comforts are derived, which if they lose, they must be tenants of their lives, at the mercy of a cabal and a guillotine.

But

But should he ever (I can hardly permit my pen to state the supposition) basely desert his master and benefactor at any future time, when his assistance may be indispensably requisite, like a coward flying to take shelter against an impending storm *, which exists but in his own cowardly imagination, why then I trust that the people of England will despise and detest him, and that the hue and cry of the country will pursue him.

Though I by no means adopt the damnable doctrine of Robespierre, who gloried in maintaining that *he defended no man*, yet I shall not pretend to enter into a vindication of Mr. Pitt's conduct in the year 1782, since surely (as Mr. Wyndham observed) a gentleman of Mr. Pitt's abilities is capable of defending himself wherever his conduct is at all defensible. But whatever reasons might have persuaded Mr. Pitt, or any other man of honour, to wish for a reform in the representation in the year 1782, there can be no considerations sufficient to induce any one in the year 1794 to sanction measures, which avowedly tend to the diminution of regal authority, and which, in fact,

* This passage is by no means meant to convey an insinuation, that no danger at present is to be apprehended. The Author is well aware that there exists a set of men, who, under the guise of being enemies to government, are enemies to the constitution: The idea which he means to convey, is this—That if the peers, and other holders of property, entrust ministers with power sufficient to cope with these *perturbed and dangerous spirits*, and if they rally round the throne, no earthly armament whatsoever, unless led on immediately by the hand of Providence, can dislodge them from their post, or wrest out of their hands Magna Charta and the statutes of the land.

will

will effect its total abolition, at a time when a set of men, who, under the cloak of being enemies to the government, are enemies to the constitution of England, adopt those very measures, as wisely judging them at once the easiest and the safest mode of completing their nefarious designs. All men, indeed, seem so thoroughly convinced of the truth which I have inculcated just above, that these measures find their support from very few amongst the higher classes of society, and are principally espoused by those, who have nothing to lose, and every thing to gain.

I have not dwelt long upon the merits or demerits of Mr. Pitt's conduct in the year 1782; they have no reference to the question in hand, though they may afford a rich theme of venomous railing and common-place malignity to *the advocates for anarchy, and the champions of reform.*

I HAVE now gone through a few cursory remarks on a publication, which contains such virulent invectives on my country, that, as an Englishman, I thought it my duty to reply to it. Since I shall remain unknown, no one can imagine that vanity, or a sense of interest, induced me to take up my pen.

I do not like to deal in professions; a useless multitude of these apparently implies, that the man who has recourse to them, is himself diffident of his own sincerity; but, in imitation of Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, I must profess myself a son of peace—one, who deems it matter of exultation, that, however insignificant he may be in other respects, he is bred and born an Englishman.

The

The path of duty is broad, and chalked out to us ; let us as manfully pursue it. To use the expression of a celebrated political writer, “ we cannot lose it by mistake, and we have no temptation to depart from it by design * : ” It leads to the shrine of fame, the temple of public approbation, and the peaceful groves of happiness. The rules of conduct prescribed to us are not, like the laws of Caligula, affixed to high pillars, so that we cannot read them ; they are not like the injunctions which the Gods of the Heathens laid upon *Œdipus*, involved in *ænigmas*, so that we cannot understand them : In very few words they may be expressed—Let Englishmen engrave these words upon their hearts, and transcribe them into their actions. It is required from us, ourselves to conform to the dictates of right reason, and to endeavour to remove the veil of darkness and delusion from minds uninstructed through ignorance, or perverted by cunning ; but if, by the previous wiles of the deceiver, persuasion shall be rendered of none effect, why then it is our duty to be ever ready to bleed with a Falkland and a Granville on the field, or to die on the scaffold, with a Strafford and a Montrose.

* Junius to the Duke of Bedford.

THE END.

Mr. Gilbert Wakefield subjoins to his "Spirit of Christianity" the flattering testimony of a lady's applause. Justly considering that that work would remain a lasting memorial of his liberality of sentiment, and benevolence of disposition, he wishes to hand down to posterity, upon the same page, a specimen of his *bonnès fortunes*. Since I have not sufficient influence with any fair-one to prevail upon her to peruse my blotted sheets, previous to their being sent to the press, I have none of their commendations to communicate to the Public; but that I may conclude in the same manner as Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, I will report the sentence passed after perusal upon his *united effort of genius, eloquence, and integrity in the cause of reason and philanthropy*, by a gentleman, no less esteemed in the literary world for his acute discernment, and great and useful qualifications, than by his numerous friends and acquaintance for the *humaniores virtutes*—

"This man has distorted Scripture from Genesis to Revelation."

The Public is requested to take notice, that these Reflections were penned before his Majesty's message, relative to treasonable practices, was sent down to the House of Commons.

X on 25th March 1794.

ERRATA.

- Page v, line 9, for *labour* read *labours*.
— 12, line 2, for *provocative* read *provocation*.
— 13, note, for *retenemus* read *retinemus*.
— 23, line 14, for *lasting* read *everlasting*.

Hon^{ble}. John Penn

From his sincere Friend
& affectionate Kinsman

Willm^m. Penn # The Author